

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 26, 2017

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

President Trump:

As Members of the United States House of Representatives Appropriations Subcommittee that funds the Environmental Protection Agency, we are deeply distressed that your transition team has ordered the EPA to freeze grants and contracts and that it has prohibited EPA staff from communicating with elected officials and state and local grant recipients.

As you are well aware, Congress appropriated funding for these grants and contracts so that EPA can carry out its vital mission to protect the health of the American people and our environment. Nearly half of the EPA budget goes to grants and contracts to the States, Tribes, non-profits, educational institutions, and others to advance human health and environmental safeguards. To halt funding for the vital work of these public and private institutions is unprecedented and unacceptable. This action is counter to the intent of Congress, which holds and exercises the power to direct such funds.

The Administration failed to notify Congress and the state environmental agencies of its freeze on EPA grant and contract funds and has refused to respond to state agency inquiries. State agencies are an essential partner in protecting public health and the environment. The Administration's deliberate communication blackout is unacceptable and must be reversed.

In order for Congress to better understand the impact of these actions on the funding for which we have oversight jurisdiction, we ask that you provide the following information:

- A complete list of the grants and contracts that were frozen under this action and their corresponding recipients.
- Any communications sent to EPA employees instituting this freeze and restricting their communication.
- A summary of any findings resulting from the team's review and their plans going forward for the grants and contracts.

Furthermore, we will be requesting that the U.S. Government Accountability Office review whether the Administration's actions run afoul of the Impoundment Control Act of 1974 and other appropriations law.

Sincerely,



Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



Nita M. Lowey
Member of Congress



Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress



Derek Kilmer
Member of Congress



Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress

Cc: Don Benton, Senior White House Advisor, EPA Transition Team

Rodney P. Frelinghuysen, Chairman, House Appropriations Committee

Ken Calvert, Chairman, House Appropriations Interior, Environment, and Related
Agencies Subcommittee